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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk This Playoff Season**  
***OHS coordinating first DUI enforcement effort during NFL Playoffs***

**Dover -** It's an exciting time of the year for football fans...it's playoff time. Whether your team is in it or not, many people just enjoy getting together on weekends at a friend's house or sports bar to watch the games. For some watching the game also involves drinking alcohol, which can turn dangerous if they try to drive afterward.

That's why, for the first time, the Office of Highway Safety is kicking off its 2009 *Checkpoint Strikeforce* campaign by coordinating DUI saturation patrols to operate during weekends in January when NFL Playoff games will be held. Twenty-six state, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies will conduct saturation patrols on Saturdays and Sundays anywhere from 4 to 9 p.m. Additional saturation patrols will be scheduled for Super Bowl Sunday along with a sobriety checkpoint to be conducted by the New Castle County DUI Task Force.

"If you plan on drinking alcohol while enjoying the playoffs, pass your keys to a sober, designated driver before you leave the house," said Andrea Summers, Community Relations Officer for the Office of Highway Safety. "Follow the rules or law enforcement will penalize you for driving impaired."

To stay safe on the night of the big game, make the following safety tips part of your playbook:

**If you are having friends over:**

- Make sure all of your guests have a designated sober driver before kickoff
- Serve plenty of high protein foods like meat and cheese, or sandwiches and avoid the chips
- Provide non-alcoholic drink alternatives - soft drinks, juice, and water

- Stop serving alcohol at the end of the third quarter of the game (just like NFL stadiums)

**If you are watching at a sports bar or restaurant:**

- Designate your sober driver before you leave the house or volunteer to be one yourself.
- Or: before you go out, program the numbers for local cab companies in your cell phone so if you find yourself in need of a ride, it is just one touch away
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol too fast. Pace yourself—eat enough food, take breaks and alternate with non-alcoholic drinks.
- Never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive while impaired.

The following police agencies are participating in the NFL playoff DUI mobilization:

Bethany Beach, Blades, Bridgeville, Cheswold, Clayton, Delaware State Police, Dewey Beach, Dover, Elsmere, Felton, Georgetown, Harrington, laurel, Middletown, Milford, Millsboro, Milton, New Castle City, new Castle County, Newark, Newport, Ocean View, Rehoboth Beach, Seaford, Smyrna, and Wyoming.

Alcohol-related motor vehicle deaths declined by 12% in Delaware last year. Forty-two (or 34%) of the 122 traffic deaths which occurred statewide in 2008 involved alcohol. The NFL playoff mobilization is the first activity in the 2009 *Checkpoint Strikeforce* campaign. The highly successful safety initiative resulted in 559 DUI arrests last year. For more information on impaired driving prevention visit the *Checkpoint Strikeforce* page on OHS's website at [www.ohs.delaware.gov](http://www.ohs.delaware.gov).

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